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# INFORMATION REPORT

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SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.

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The attached material is sent for your retention in the belief that it may be of interest:

Reviews of the Local Arabic Press, Beirut, Lebanon.

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July 16, 1949

Review of the Local Arabic Press  
Appearing on July 16, 1949.

PRINT

In commenting on reports that Premier Riadh as-Solh proposes to visit Damascus tomorrow to discuss with the Syrian authorities Arab issues as well as the subject of co-ordinating Lebano-Syrian policies, the paper praises the Premier's efforts and welcomes Lebanon's role as a messenger of peace and understanding among the Arabs. But it reminds the Premier, at the same time, that he should also attend to the internal situation in Lebanon which leaves much to be desired. The paper complains that the Lebanese people are now living under constant fear because of the lack of security; because of the emergency laws; because of the military censorship; because journalists are being tried by the Courts one after another; because of the high prices of commodities; because of the almost dead exports; because of the unrestricted imports; because of the unsuccessful estivage season; and finally because of the state of anxiety in which Lebanon is now existing. Therefore, the paper urges that the promised reforms be implemented immediately by dissolving the Chamber of Deputies and by holding new elections.

AL-'AMAL

Under the headline OUR REALITY, this paper carries the following editorial explaining its attitude, for the second time, toward the American University of Beirut:

"We must be truly barbarians to demand that the American University be closed.

"Do they really think, those who are attacking us on the grounds that we have demanded the closing of the University, that we are barbarians and enemies of science and knowledge?

"We said, after referring to the unfriendly movements which have had a fertile soil in some of the University's atmospheres that 'the calamity through which the country is passing must not be renewed, even if this should necessitate closing the University.'

"If your eye offends you, pluck it or if your right hand offends you, cut it.

"Just as the plucking and cutting in the parable of the Bible means plucking and cutting of the offending eye and hand, the closing means doing away with everything which might be a source of national evil or a cause of a Lebanese collapse.

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"This is the meaning of our statement. Yet, we have belittled neither the University nor its cultural position. We have not denied the merits of the Lebanese who received their education in it. We have never disavowed the glories it has showered on us. We have never been ungrateful to Sarruf, Nimr, Abicarius, Dhomet, Zaidan, Thabit, Shumayyel, Baroudi, Sphtimus, Malik, Ma'luf and Taqiddin. We have never denied the merits of Sabah or of any other of those who have become famous for their patriotism or for their great learning. But we have lately observed propaganda and movements in certain departments of the University which are not consistent with the sound Lebanese spirit. This has pained us because this institution has produced Sarruf, Nimr, Zaidan and the other members of the noble group.

"When the country's security demands the closing of the gates of heaven, the gates of heavens must be closed. It does not matter if the clamorers should clamor.

"No, the accusation that we have demanded the closing of the University, because it is a cultural institution, does not apply to us. In the past, we were accused of having defended foreign interests when we alone defended educational institutions - the University and others - and when hatred of the enemy and of everything foreign, raged in the hearts of the people.

"Our page is white and our conscience is clear. Our water is not troubled so as to attract fishers of good will and sound intentions."

This paper writes that according to reports published in the press yesterday and the day before, the Government has dissolved organizations. It adds:

"The press also reported that the Ministry of Interior has addressed special notes to the organizations, hoping that they will change themselves into parties.

"The Lebanese Phalanges deem it necessary to announce that they have not received any official notice in this respect, and that they regard the dissolution story as a 'seasonal' tune which appears now and disappears then in the world of falsehood.

(Translator's note: Despite the above article, AL-'ANAL carries the following notice on its front page:

"THE PHALANGES POLITICAL PARTY will shortly proceed with registering those who wish to join it."

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In reporting Mr. Pinkerton's visit to the Foreign Office yesterday with Mr. Sands, the paper writes:

"The discussions were, of course, shrouded with secrecy. But all that has been said about the American Minister's visit is that he continued the consultations, in the name of his government, with the Lebanese government regarding the activities of the Lausanne Conference."

#### AL-HADAF

calls upon the newspaper publishers to compose their differences and to unite themselves in order to protect their interests in view of the manner in which they are being treated in Lebanon.

Jawdat Hashim is a writer in this paper. He addresses an open letter to Archbishop Mubarak in which he criticizes the prelate's political activities, asks him to attend to his church duties only and concludes:

"If you insist on remaining where you are, then allow us to ask you to abandon 'the vestment of immunity' and to descend to our own world. If you refuse to do this, then we will have a chat with the government and not with you. We hope you will not compel us to do so at a time when we urgently need action on one front which will be in your and our welfare."

#### TELEGRAPH

reminds the government of its promise for reforms and suggests to the authorities the formulation of a five-year plan which "will include far-reaching social and economic reforms and will not be limited to road construction only. It should combat unemployment; improve industry, agriculture and commerce; distribute justice and release liberties..."

#### SAWT AL-AHRAR

complains of the manner in which the authorities are treating newspaper publishers in Lebanon, says that press liberties are lacking and puts the blame for this situation on the publishers themselves "whose disunity and non-cooperation are encouraging the authorities to do what they like, to chain newsmen and to hurl them into the prisons with outlaws and criminals."

#### AR-RUNAD

In urging the Arab countries to collaborate and work together at the Lausanne Conference which will resume its meetings next week, this paper briefly reviews the relations of Arab states with Britain, France and the United States and concludes:

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"There is a truth which must be realized by the Arab political leaders, namely: dependence upon the friendship of France, Britain and the United States because of their rivalry in the East, is unrealistic thinking. These three powers are in full accord on military, war and peace issues and no one of them is interested in disturbing the peace and creating local troubles which will benefit only Communism and the power sponsoring it."

AMERICAN LEGATION, BEIRUT

July 18, 1949

Review of the Local Arabic Press  
Appearing on July 17, 1949.

BEIRUT

calls upon the Arab writers not to attack this or that Arab country at a time when the Arab representatives are resuming their discussions with the Jews in Lausanne. Wisdom invites us, the paper warns "to stop this campaign, to control our nerves and to abandon everything that might harm the Arab countries and their leaders. This is a very delicate interval. It is very critical, because there is one enemy who will benefit from our wanton press campaign. This enemy is Israel. Shall we disagree while our house is on fire? There are about one million Palestinian refugees who are suffering from great hardships and it is probable that we will discontinue our aid to them in a month or two. What will their condition be after this period?.....We are now at the crossroads. We must either renew ourselves and follow the path of life, or continue our neglect and indifference and thus follow the path of death."

AL-HADAF

writes that <sup>it</sup> appears that Riadh as-Solh's efforts to bring the Arab leaders together at a round table are almost bearing fruit and that the meeting might take place in a Lebanese summer resort. In this connection, the paper recalls the large number of meetings which the Arab leaders held in the past and says their present reluctance to meet is perhaps due to their shame "after the horrible past has been exposed to the eyes of the Arab peoples."

SAWT AL-AHRAR

complains that the Higher Council of the ~~Common~~ Supreme Interests has, in implementing the Lebano-Syrian economic agreement, increased the duties on certain commodities in a manner which is disturbing the commercial circles. Particularly, it continues, "as most of the affected commodities are used by the poor and the middle classes. Therefore, the poor consumer must not be the scapegoat so that the Treasury might recover the losses it has sustained through exempting certain industrial raw materials from Customs duty."

TELEGRAPH

carries the following editorial on the subject of AL-'AMAL and the AUB:

"Our contemporary AL-'AMAL wrote, a few days ago, an article in which it made purely patriotic

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observations on matters relating to the American University and to certain policies which are harmful to Lebanon and to its existence. The observations were innocent and did not mention any demand for closing educational institutions. But when these institutions become lenient in such matters they bear great responsibilities toward the nation. It appears that there is a pas word among the former University graduates who are replying at one time. Their replies are like those who have graduated from an institution which they are obliged to defend - we appreciate the cultural efforts and services of the University.

"We had hoped that men other than the Alumni of the University would reply so that they might reconcile AL-'AMAL'S national purpose with the improvised defense. TELAGRAPH can not but act as an umpire between the two. It therefore invites the graduates to consider the national observations. We also invite AL-'AMAL to appreciate the services of this institution whose efforts Lebanon registers with letters of gold.

"With regard to AL-'AMAL, we understand that Sheikh Pierre Jumayyel and Mr. Penrose, the President of the University, have arranged to meet Monday morning with Sheikh Sa'ad Taqiddin, the President of the Alumni. It is said that Jumayyel will deny all the allegations that the Phalanges have demanded the closing of the University."

#### AD-DIYAR

says that while it does not want to criticize the Military Court for the sentence it has passed on publisher Ghassan Twaini, it wishes to tell the government that

"Ghassan Twaini is a well-mannered young man who holds diplomas which are seldom possessed by a journalist in Lebanon. We the journalists must attract and not scare away the educated elements. We tell the government that if it wishes to raise the standard of the Lebanese press side by side with the advancement of Lebanon, such advancement will not be possible so long as semi-literates control the press and so long as the educated elements regard press work as hazardous. Here we find the door of encouragement widely open and the government can give an example for such encouragement. It needs only issue a decree either commuting or canceling Ghassan Twaini's sentence. If it does so, it will set an example of tolerance and willingness to encourage the educated youths."

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KUL SHAI' (July 15, 1949)

publishes the following newswire under a big headline:

"The Lebanese Foreign Office has received a copy of the proposed economic treaty between Lebanon and the United States. This proposal has been studied for more than a year. It was the subject of a long study during Dr. Charles Malik's visit to Lebanon at the latter part of 1948. This project comprises twenty typewritten pages. It aims, among other things, at organizing the economic relations between Lebanon and America on fixed and equal bases.

"It is expected that this project will be referred to the appropriate authorities for examination and comment before it is submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval."

ASH-SHARA

states that the condition of the newspapers in Lebanon "is similar to that prevailing in the quarrelling and disagreeing Arab countries. Blows are falling on them from all sides and directions while they are oblivious of everything but their enmities and dissensions."

This paper publishes an article by one Mubt ibn Khaldun who strongly criticizes AL-'AKAL's article against the AUB and defends the educational institutions "that engrave in the hearts of their students sound teachings on Arab nationalism and independence."



AMERICAN LEGATION, BEIRUT

July 19, 1949.

Review of the Local Arabic Press  
Appearing on July 19, 1949.

BEIRUT

In inviting the Lebanese people to a general national congress to solve their problems once and for all, this paper complains

"That the Chamber of Deputies is paralyzed; the opposition is sleeping on promises; Lebanon, this beloved homeland, is being beaten by storms; and the Lebanese people are stunned, watching the calamities befalling them one after another without uttering a single word or moving their lips. The Government is widening the gap between itself and the people. It is in one valley and the people are in another. The Lebanese parties and organizations are trifling with everything and are neglecting the national interests. The press is disunited and is not fulfilling its mission at this critical interval through which Lebanon is passing. Is it possible that this regrettable situation should continue, because if it would, annihilation would be our inevitable fate.....

"In describing the existing circumstances through which we are passing, we call upon the peaceful people to maintain peace and order. We invite them to hold a general congress of those men who truly represent them, whether in the opposition or in the government - a congress in which the situation will be discussed from all angles and in which decisive resolutions will be reached.

"Our call for a congress to include select Lebanese is the last arrow in our quiver, now that the Chamber of Deputies is paralyzed.....If the Lebanese people fail to respond to our sincere call, this will not discourage us. Indeed, we will continue to be in the field with our noble brethren to defend Lebanon's right to live to our last breath.

"We have said, and we repeat our saying, that we are afraid. If fear spreads among the people, it will mar their present and future. Shall the Lebanese people awake and call one another for a general congress to which we are inviting them and in which they must solve all their problems once and for all?"

This paper reports that Shukri Bakhaah, publisher of ZAHLA AL-FATAT was severely mauled in Zahla last Sunday because of party differences. The paper asks the Government to stop "this criminal campaign which a number of our compatriots are waging against writers and journalists."

The following communique has been issued:

"Certain Egyptian newspapers have published a telegram from the Associated Press Correspondent in Damascus to the effect that a number of Iraqi statesmen, former deputies and followers of Rashid Ali al-Gailani residing in Syria and Lebanon met somewhere in Lebanon this week, decided to form a popular republican government in exile and to use Lebanon as its headquarters. The Directorate of Press and Propaganda is authorized to state that this report is fabricated and absolutely unfounded."

#### AL-HAYAT

In wondering what has happened to the members of the Chamber of Deputies at this critical period of Lebanon's life, this paper states in part:

"The country is suffering these days from a psychological crisis which has been unprecedented since the inception of our national rule. It is natural that this feeling should infect the people because we are newly acquainted with international life. The innovation of political terrorism - with its attendant revolutions, killings, assassinations and executions - appeared in our commune only a few days ago. It will be long before we are able to train ourselves to accept this precedent as an ordinary phenomenon in our political life, as is the case with every young state." The editorial then says:

"In all this crisis we have not even heard one voice from the Chamber of Deputies.....Where are the Deputies hiding? Why don't they prove their existence? Why haven't we heard their voice? It is really regrettable that the Chamber of Deputies should disappear in such a grave crisis because its absence will confirm what the pessimists and rumor-mongers have been repeating about the value of the 'democratic' system in this country. This absence in the hour of crisis will not properly inspire the people."

AL-HAYAT devotes a long article to the representations various Lebanese groups are making to the President of the Republic and to the members of the government to commute the capital punishment to which a number of Qawdis have been sentenced by the Military Court. The paper "warmly" appeals to the government to appreciate the situation and to change the death sentences on these youths to some other sentences. It says that so long as the government has punished Antun Sa'ada "logic demands that it should be lenient with his members on the grounds that they were like tools that blindly carried out his orders."

#### AL-'AMAL

explains the position of the Phalanges toward the government's recent action against their headquarters. The paper says that rumors will run wild about the

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incident and that tendentious elements will tie it to previous reports about the dissolution of organizations. But it reassures its readers that the truth will eventually belie all the rumors. It continues:

"Following the well-known incidents which ended with the pursuit of the Qawsi Suri Party and with the developments of the calamity, it became incumbent upon the Lebanese Phalanges to think about defending themselves.

"The Organization and its leaders have received many letters of threats and intimidations. People have often spoken to us about the boiling anger against the Phalanges and their leaders...In view of this fact, it was inevitable for the Phalanges to take precautions. It was also essential for their leaders to protect themselves: measures for self-defense, no more, no less. This is the situation. This is the truth.

"Having observed that the men of the administration are surrounding themselves with private guards, having observed that the high government officials are not contented with official protection but are asking their followers to protect them - if this is the case with the officials who are surrounded with the security forces - how could the youths, who know that their enemy harbors stronger hate against them than against the men of the administration, fail to think about defending themselves?

"The Phalanges have never contemplated undertaking any movement outside the pale of the laws and regulations. They have never thought of attacking any one, of changing any system, or occupying centers of government by force. Otherwise, they would not have done everything in broad daylight.

"In thinking about defending themselves, the Phalanges have thought about defending Lebanon. They have dedicated themselves to this purpose and not to carving out a part of Lebanon and annexing it to other states....

"The Phalanges are more attached to Lebanon, to its independence and to its security than many, many people.

"The Government will find that we do not have any hidden thing of which we could feel ashamed.

"Everything with us is clear. Everything is pure. Everything is open. And everything is as strong as our faith in our country."

#### AD-DIYAR

Under the heading THE NECESSITY OF DISSOLVING ALL ORGANIZATIONS this paper refers to the recent government action against the Phalanges. It says that it is a fact that the Phalanges possess arms which they use for self-defense. But, it observes, the defense of the people is the duty of the public

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forces and not of private organizations because "if our souls, properties and interests were not protected by the law and by the official forces, then our inevitable fate would be death." This being the case, the paper argues that the Phalanges' contention that they carry arms in order to protect themselves is neither sound nor adequate since the public forces have demonstrated their ability to punish trouble makers. The paper continues:

"Fire and fuel do not meet. When our organizations are para-military; when they give their members military training; when they have special forces for guarding, attacking and maintaining order; and when some of these forces possess arms, then we bring the fire and the fuel together in such an atmosphere!

"We realize that the incident of the Phalanges headquarters is a simple one and that it can not be compared with any incident of this kind. The Phalanges are an organization that hates trouble, respects the law and looks after the country's interests. We realize all this. But this does not prevent us from inviting the attention of the government and of the Phalanges to the calamity of continuing this unusual situation. We tell the government and the organizations that the country's interests come before everything else, that the security of the state is above all other considerations, and that the public interests and the country's interests demand the dissolution of all the organizations, because it is time for us, as an independent and democratic country, to live in a sound party atmosphere."

#### AL-"ADAF

The tone of this paper's editorial is almost similar to that of AD-DIYAR regarding the government's action against the Phalanges. It says in part:

"The people are with the government in this campaign because they want stability and because they want to be sure that they live in a country where the first and the last words are with the law. It would be better for the organizations, parties and the people, if the case of all these organizations and parties were reconsidered, because most of these were formed in circumstances known to the country."

#### ASH-SHARQ

"which is known for its complete neutrality..... appeals to the President of the Republic, in the name of the afflicted and miserable families (of the twelve Qawmis who have been sentenced to death) to commute their death sentences to ~~imprisonment for life~~ imprisonment for life."

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AN-NAHAR

reports that it has received a telegram from Brazil signed by 200 members of the Syrian and Lebanese communities there expressing their views on Antun Sa'ada's case. The paper does not publish the contents of the telegram but lists the names of the senders only "in deference to the Press Law and the Military Court.."

SANT AL-AHRAR

complains that the government is persecuting the press in Lebanon. In its second editorial the paper appeals to the President of the Republic to be merciful to the twelve Dawis who have been sentenced to death because, it says, "mercy is even above justice."

AMERICAN LEGATION, BEIRUT

July 20, 1949

Review of the Local Arabic Press  
Appearing on July 20, 1949.

BEIRUT

again urges the necessity of holding a national congress to include the various elements in Lebanon for the purpose of laying down present and future plans in the political, economic, social and cultural fields. The paper says this congress should be led by the youths and adds:

"Who knows, it is probable that this congress to which we are calling the people and which must include all the Lebanese intellectual elements might turn into a party with political programs, with immediate and far-reaching aims and with democratic principles from which it will not deviate: Thus our ideal Lebanon will generate a new life, will eliminate need, disease and ignorance and will kill fear, this pest which is bothering the Lebanese in this interval."

According to this paper, the Council of Ministers met yesterday and decided, among other things, to dissolve the para-military organizations in Lebanon.

Like the majority of the Lebanese newspapers, BEIRUT appeals to the President of the Republic to show mercy toward the twelve Qawmis who have been sentenced to death because, it says "they were exploited like dumb tools and did not realize the sins they committed."

AL-HAYAT

writes in connection with the problem of the youths in Lebanon that "the Government could attack parties, dissolve organizations, confiscate arms, arrest, persecute and pursue. But these will not solve the problems of the youths in a State that does not recognize the youths except in relation to the sectarian and feudal equilibrium." The paper then reminds its readers that in the past the percentage of literacy was one percent while it is more than eighty at the present time. Thus, it continues:

"Political and social evolution can not be turned backward. If the state insists on ignoring the youths, it will further complicate the problem and will harm itself and the youths as well. The youths of today will, by the law of growth, become the masters of the country tomorrow. They might overcome those who have exceeded them by age and might subject them to a hard reckoning.



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"The Government could render great services to the country through the youths. It could take the first step along the positive road by hastening the application of ~~the~~ compulsory military service. This will be the best present the Government could offer the youths..."

Columnist Bassil Daqqaq warns his readers not to be optimistic about the forthcoming session of the Political Committee of the Arab League "because the differences are too many and because their causes are still extant. A universal change in the policies of all the Arab governments is needed." At any rate, he feels that the desire for a meeting, after the passage of such a long time, is a good indication in itself.

AL-HAYAT feels that the Government will not take further measures against the Phalanges and will restrict its action "within the confines in which the incident occurred by dealing with the detained guards only..."

#### AL-'ANAL

In re-iterating the patriotic principles of the Phalanges and their love for liberty, this paper says in part:

\*Those who wish to see the Phalanges exterminated are happy.

\*The enemies of Lebanon are overjoyed.

\*Those who promote chaos, those who are against order, those who exploit confusion, and those who resent any national, conscious and sound control, are glad because of the unfortunate incident of the Phalanges' guards. They are exaggerating it and are imagining that the Government, after having eliminated the Jawsi Suri Party, has definitely decided to get rid of the Phalanges. But the responsible authorities, thank God, realize the real nature of the incident and do not intend to harm the Phalanges..."

This paper reports that Pierre Jumayyel was received by the President of the Republic yesterday. It also prints in heavy type the following announcement:

"The Phalanges headquarters was opened at 1:00 a.m. (Wednesday). The red wax seals have been removed from the Phalanges headquarters which has resumed its normal life."

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In reporting Mr. Pinkerton's visit to the Foreign Office with Mr. Sands yesterday, this paper's correspondent comments:

"The talks dealt with the subject of the conclusion of a commercial treaty between Lebanon and the United States of America. This treaty will be based on the exchange of certain products between the two countries. America will import from Lebanon specific types of products, chief among which will be olive oil for scarce currency. America will also provide Lebanon with the required equipment."

#### TELAGRAPH

wholeheartedly supports the Phalanges and says the recent incident is a simple one and does not justify the hue and cry which is being raised by certain tendentious elements. It adds that it is the practice of newspaper publishers here to keep arms in their premises for self-defense and that it should not be strange if the Phalanges kept heavier arms to protect themselves against their enemies.

#### AN-NAHAR

feels that the Government intends to shelve the Phalanges incident and adds that Gabriel al-Murr, the Interior Minister "has realized that there were attempts to settle the question to his exclusion. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ He threatened to resign but they treated him with promises. But this drug did not affect the Minister's nerves this time. He knew what was going on behind him. He remained at his house Tuesday and refused to attend the Council of Ministers' meeting. When the Council met at Aley, it was taken unawares by the arrival of al-Murr's letter of resignation. The responsible officials then tried to persuade him to withdraw his resignation. But he insisted. The Council then accepted the resignation."

This paper understands, in connection with Mr. Pinkerton's visit to the Foreign Office yesterday, that Mr. Pinkerton discussed the proposed commercial treaty between Lebanon and the United States. It adds:

"The treaty was drafted in the United States and was then submitted by the American Legation to the Foreign Office which translated it into Arabic. It comprises more than thirty articles covering all the commercial phases. It safeguards the rights of both countries as equals. We understand that the United States has requested the creation of a free zone in Beirut for American goods shipped in transit to the Middle East."

#### ASH-SHARQ

begins its editorial with the statement that it opposes Pierre Jumayyel and the Lebanese Phalanges in matters of principle only and that it does not bear any personal animosity against Jumayyel. The paper says it is making



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this declaration because of reports reaching it that a number of Phalangists were arranging for some sort of an attack on ASH-SHARQ in order to "punish" its editor for the reports his paper published yesterday about the Government's action against the Phalanges headquarters. The editor states he waited until a late hour last night for the Phalanges to attack him but no one showed up! However, he asserts that the paper's coverage of the event was not written in a malicious spirit. (Translator's note: ASH-SHARQ reported yesterday that Pierre Gemayyel had left Beirut and was probably hiding somewhere in Lebanon.)

#### AL-HADAF

writes in a vaguely worded editorial that the Arab world is divided into two camps which are fiercely fighting one another for survival. It calls upon the "camp which mediates between the wearers of crowns" to appeal to the two camps to safeguard their peoples' interests and to avoid the disasters which will arise from their continued misunderstandings. It adds:

"We think that it is improbable that those who have flown to London to discuss the situation with those interested in these parts, will accept what might prejudice the future of the country in lieu of the salvage operation. We are afraid that if this cruel campaign and governmental grouping against a specific Arab House is continued, those who rule in its name in these days might squander the rights of their peoples under the influence of the atmosphere and of their painful embarrassment. In this event this dissipation should take place, God forbid, its price will be paid by all of us, without exception."